

## Message Text

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ACTION NEA-10

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-04 H-01 INR-07 L-03

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FEA-01 OES-06 INT-05 ACDA-07 NRC-05 /098 W

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R 080801Z FEB 77

FM AMEMBASSY RABAT

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 964

INFO AMEMBASSY TEHRAN

C O N F I D E N T I A L RABAT 0711

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR, ECON, ENGR, MO, IR

SUBJECT: VISIT OF IRANIAN PRIME MINISTER HOVEYDA TO MOROCCO -

JAN. 29-FEB. 2, 1977

1. SUMMARY. HOVEYDA VISIT RECEIVED EXTENSIVE MEDIA COVERAGE WITH ACCENT ON CLOSE, WIDE-RANGING MOROCCAN-IRANIAN RELATIONS. AREAS OF PARTICULAR FOCUS INCLUDED PHOSPHATES AND OIL, CIVIL AVIATION, TOURISM AND CULTURAL TIES. SIMILARITY OF VIEWS ON MIDDLE EAST AND AFRICA ALSO STRESSED. VISIT FITS IN WITH KING HASSAN'S EFFORTS TO DEMONSTRATE, ESPECIALLY TO ALGERIA, THAT MOROCCO HAS POWERFUL FRIENDS. FUTURE BILATERAL RELATIONS AT SAME TIME APPEAR TO HAVE POTENTIALLY SIGNIFICANT ECONOMIC CONTENT. END SUMMARY

2. IRANIAN PRIME MINISTER AMIR ABBAS HOVEYDA, ACCOMPANIED BY HIGH LEVEL DELEGATION INCLUDING JAAFER NADIM, DEPUTY SECRETARY OF STATE FOR FOREIGN AND ECONOMIC AFFAIRS, AND JUWAD Wafa, DEPUTY SECRETARY OF STATE FOR FINANCIAL AFFAIRS, ARRIVED RABAT JANUARY 29 FOR FIVE DAY STATE VISIT. SEMI-OFFICIAL PRESS DEVOTED EXTENSIVE COVERAGE TO VISIT DURING ENTIRE PERIOD. "ALREADY EXISTING STRONG BILATERAL TIES, SIMILAR ASPECTS OF TWO COUNTRIES' NATIONAL CULTURES, AND FRATERNAL AND RECIPROCAL RESPECT EXISTING BETWEEN KING HASSAN AND THE SHAH" WERE RECURRENT THEMES.

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3. HOVEYDA HELD 90 MINUTE DISCUSSION WITH PRIME MINISTER OSMAN ON JANUARY 29 AND WAS RECEIVED ON JANUARY 31 KING HASSAN, TO WHOM HE PRESENTED A PERSONAL MESSAGE FROM THE SHAH. ON FEB. 2, HOVEYDA HELD PRESS CONFERENCE, DURING WHICH HE REVEALED SCOPE OF INTENDED BILATERAL ECONOMIC AND TECHNICAL COOPERATION AND EXPRESSED DESIRE TO CONSOLIDATE BILATERAL RELATIONS IN VARIOUS FIELDS,

SUCH AS PHOSPHATES. HOVEYDA ALSO STATED THAT IRAN WOULD CONTRIBUTE TOWARD CONSTRUCTION OF AN OIL REFINERY (UNDERSTOOD BY SOME TO BE THE LUBRICANTS PLANT PROJECTED FOR MOHAMMEDIA), AND INCREASE ITS PURCHASE OF CITRUS FRUITS AND OTHER (NOT FURTHER SPECIFIED) PRODUCTS. ESTABLISHMENT OF AN AIR ROUTE BETWEEN THE TWO COUNTRIES AND ENCOURAGEMENT OF IRANIAN TOURISM TO MOROCCO WERE ALSO CITED BY HOVEYDA. QUERIED BY PRESS ABOUT POSSIBILITY OF MOROCCAN/IRANIAN COOPERATION IN PEACEFUL USE OF NUCLEAR POWER, HOVEYDA ACKNOWLEDGED THE POTENTIAL FOR SUCH COOPERATION. IN RESPONSE TO JOURNALIST'S QUESTION ON SHAH'S RECENT STATEMENT TO KUWAIT NEWSPAPER AS-SIYASSA, HOVEYDA COMMENTED THAT IF IRANIAN MEANS DIMINISHED, GOI WOULD HAVE TO ADJUST DOWNWARD ITS POLICIES IN EVERY DOMAIN, INCLUDING FOREIGN AID AND INTERNATIONAL RESPONSIBILITIES.

4. ALTHOUGH JOINT COMMUNIQUE ISSUED ON FEBRUARY 3 MADE REFERENCE TO ECONOMIC TOPICS, POLITICAL ISSUES RECEIVED CENTRAL ATTENTION. COMMUNIQUE POINTED TO COMPLETE SIMILARITY OF VIEWS BETWEEN THE TWO COUNTRIES, ESPECIALLY ON THE MIDDLE EAST AND AFRICA. BOTH SIDES CALLED FOR ISRAELI WITHDRAWAL FROM ALL OCCUPIED ARAB TERRITORIES AND ESTABLISHING THE UNSHAKEABLE RIGHT OF THE PALESTINIAN PEOPLE TO ENJOY NATIONAL IDENTITY. THEY ALSO CONDEMNED VESTIGES OF COLONIALISM AND IMPOSITION OF POLICY OF RACIAL DISCRIMINATION, SINGLING OUT SOUTH AFRICA, AND DECLARED NEED FOR SELF-DETERMINATION FOR TERRITORIES UNDER COLONIAL DOMINATION. COMMUNIQUE FINALLY EXPRESSED CONCERN OVER DISORDERS IN THE INTERNATIONAL ECONOMIC SITUATION AND POINTED TO NEED FOR ESTABLISHING EQUITABLE INTERNATIONAL ECONOMIC SYSTEM DESIGNED TO END DETERIORATING ECONOMIC SITUATION IN DEVELOPING NATIONS.

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5. COMMENT: HOVEYDA VISIT, COMING IN WAKE OF VISITS BY SAUDI PRINCES FAHD AND ABDELLAH AND TRAVEL BY MOROCCAN ROYAL CABINET DIRECTOR AND FINANCE MINISTER TO SAUDIA ARABIA AND GULF, REFLECTS KING HASSAN'S EFFORTS TO GIVE VISIBILITY TO MOROCCO'S GOOD RELATIONS WITH HIGH-POWERED FRIENDS IN MIDDLE EAST. WHILE SAHARA ISSUE WAS NOT PUBLICLY ADDRESSED, HEAVY MEDIA PLAY DEVOTED TO HOVEYDA NO DOUBT AIMED IN PART AT SHOWING ALGERIA THAT GOM IS NOT ALONE IN INTERNATIONAL ARENA. ALTHOUGH SUBSTANCE OF VISIT APPEARS TO HAVE BEEN LARGELY IN ECONOMIC SPHERE, JOINT COMMUNIQUE, FOCUSSED ON INTERNATIONAL POLITICAL ISSUES, WAS PROBABLY DESIGNED INTER ALIA TO KEEP UP THIRD WORLD CREDENTIALS OF BOTH IRAN AND MOROCCO.

6. REFERENCE TO ENHANCED COOPERATION IN PHOSPHATES DIFFICULT TO ASSESS, SINCE IRAN ALSO HAS PHOSPHATES. THIS COULD OF COURSE REFER MERELY TO COORDINATED MARKETING STRATEGY. FURTHER INTRIGUING THOUGHT, HOWEVER, IS THAT IRANIAN CRUDE OIL IS BOTH HEAVY AND HIGH IN SULPHUR. IT COULD THEN POSSIBLY BE USED BY MOROCCO TO SUPPLY INTERNAL NEED FOR HEAVY OIL FRACTIONS AS WELL

AS SULPHUR FOR USE IN TREATMENT OF PHOSPHATE ROCK. ADDITIONALLY, MOROCCO HAS HIGH INTEREST IN EXTRACTION OF U205 FROM PHOSPHORIC ACID, WHILE IRAN WILL BE REQUIRING INCREASING QUANTITIES OF URANIUM TO FUEL ITS FUTURE NUCLEAR PLANTS. IRAN'S REPORTED WILLINGNESS TO CONTRIBUTE TOWARD CONSTRUCTION OF AN OIL REFINERY MAY THUS BE MORE LONG RANGE THAT IT FIRST APPEARS. WITH IRAN CURRENTLY LOSING SHARE OF OIL MARKET AS A RESULT OF DISAGREEMENTS ON OPEC PRICING, EMBASSY CONSIDERS IT LIKELY THAT IT MAY BE WILLING TO LEND OR INVEST IN MOROCCAN PETRO-CHEMICALS COMPLEX IN RETURN FOR LONG-TERM MARKETING AGREEMENT TIED IN WITH FUTURE ACCESS TO MOROCCAN URANIUM. IN SUM, UNLIKE MOST AGREEMENTS RESULTING FROM CONSTANT FLOW OF TOP DRAWER FOREIGN OFFICIALS, THIS ONE SEEMS TO HAVE POTENTIALLY SIGNIFICANT ECONOMIC CONTENT.

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